

# Immediate Problem Facing U.S. In Dominican Republic Crisis Is to Head Off Another Trujillo

Presence of American Troops Rules Out  
Emergence of Red Rule, but Right-  
Wing Tyranny Is a Threat

CPYRGHT

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THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM facing the United States is not how to prevent the emergence of another Fidel Castro but how to head off another Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina.

No Communist government could conceivably emerge as long as such overwhelming United States forces remain here. But by the unfortunate logic of Caribbean politics, there is a strong possibility that efforts to head off another Castro will lead to another right-wing tyranny like the 30-year dictatorship that ended with Trujillo's assassination in 1961.

Worse, the next step in this particular logic would be massive growth of the anti-Americanism and left-wing extremism that the present military intervention is intended to prevent.

THIS is the dilemma in which the United States finds itself. The United States is still mainly alone in the affair.

Leading Latin American figures who helped get the necessary two-thirds vote in the council of the Organization of American States to convert this into an inter-American operation were reported to have done so mostly to get the United States off the hook and save the inter-American system rather than in any spirit of sympathy with the original unilateral intervention.

The omens are not good. The U.S. forces have the appearance of being aligned with those of Brig Gen. Wessin y Wessin against the rebels despite assertions of American neutrality.

Wessin is not at all a popular figure, and American officials say emphatically that he must not become the new head of government. His forces and those of the United States are side by side and at peace with each other, although a U.S. Army information officer insists that "tactically, logistically and administratively there is no relation between the two forces."

ON THE REBEL side, the key figure remains former President Juan Bosch, who was overthrown by Wessin in September 1963 and is in exile in Puerto Rico. He remains the hero of the thousands of rebels who are risking their lives by defying overwhelming odds in the continuing insurgency, although he has formally given up the right to the remainder of his term to Col Francisco Caamano Deno.

Some of Bosch's best friends say that he was a poor president—weak as an administrator, naive in his gentle handling of the Communists, and generally vacillating and temperamental.

They say that in the current situation he lacked personal courage.

One of Bosch's old friends and steadfast sympathizers points out that Bosch could have taken any one of a dozen planes in San Juan and flown to the Dominican Republic to lead the revolution that was trying to put him back into the presidency. Instead, he said, Bosch waited in vain for the air force to send a plane and tried to direct the revolution by telephone, radio and press conference.

BOSCH CLAIMS to have averted a bloody battle last Saturday between the rebels and the Americans. He told a reporter that Col. Caamano had telephoned last Saturday afternoon and told him that the American marines were advancing but that the rebels would fight to the death.

Bosch said that he replied, "Don't fight the Marines. If they kill you, you shall die. If you are captured, then you are to be a prisoner. We are fighting for democracy against Wessin. Remember, we are not fighting the

The previous head of government, Donald Reid Cabral, whom both the rebels and Wessin have turned against, was supported only by the military. When he tried to curtail the privileges of the military and invoked economic austerity for the civilian population, it was an easy matter to topple him.

W. TAPLEY BENNETT, the American ambassador, is blamed widely for "over-reacting" when the revolution broke out, for refusing a request by Caamano and other rebel leaders on April 27 that he mediate with the Wessin forces, and for allegedly ordering the Marines to collaborate with the Wessin forces when they landed the next day. All those acts contributed to the present situation.

The appearance of an alliance between the American forces and Wessin became particularly embarrassing when the general began playing "The Star Spangled Banner" at the start of his daily radio broadcast. He was ordered to stop.

Skeptics here doubt the Central Intelligence Agency's report that Communists had taken over the rebel movement. Of the 55 Communists and Communist sympathizers said to be participating, only a few were actually known to be active. The others were merely reported to have entered the country recently.

References in the CIA report to non-Dominicans in the revolution turned out to have little basis. The only foreigners who could be identified were one Spanish loyalist, two former members of the French Foreign Legion and a Corsican.

The CIA's chief of Latin American operations is understood to have had little experience in the area. He is said to have made his first tour of Latin America last year, for an introductory "look-see," as he put it.

CIA operations in Latin America have been criticized also on the ground that its agents here mainly were transferred as a group from the Federal Bureau of Investigation—which used to have jurisdiction over the area—and that former FBI agents have little appreciation of political matters. Nonetheless, many critics are reluctant to say that there was no possibility of a Communist or Castro-style takeover of the rebellion.

THE WORST omen for the future is the pattern of the Johnson Administration's over-all record in respect to the Dominican Republic.

When the Bosch government was overthrown in 1963, Mr. Johnson waited only briefly before recognizing the junta that replaced it and resuming American economic aid, without which no government could survive. But when the Bosch forces tried in the last two weeks to overthrow the illegal government and re-establish their constitutional regime, the Johnson Administration rushed in with troops.

Bosch and other rebel leaders say that they had already crushed the Wessin forces when the Americans arrived.

An American who was on the scene at the 1963 coup has written a detailed memorandum about what happened. He points out that Ambassador John Bartlow Martin was authorized to make it clear that the United States would never again allow a Castro regime to develop in the Caribbean. That guarantee has been backed by the full military might of the United States, the observer said.

"UNFORTUNATELY, it was not U.S. policy to employ the same degree of force against the overthrow of constitutional government in the Caribbean by the extreme right," he writes.

"Had John Martin been given the authority to state that in equally forceful language, the tin soldiers with their gold-plated pistols and handful of rusty tanks would not have dared to venture out of San Isidro.

"The irony is that the guarantee we have made is the most difficult to honor. If a Communist government were to come to power in the Dominican Republic it only could do so on the crest of a rather broad wave of public support. To put down a revolt, which has the backing of a substantial percentage of a population is a considerable undertaking, yet this is what we have guaranteed in the Caribbean.

To put down a palace revolt involving a few score brass hats with virtually no popular following other than the tutumpote (Bosch's word for "fat cats"), is a far less expensive guarantee to enforce. Yet the United States government was unwilling to make this kind of guarantee."

Such was the prediction in this private memorandum written in late 1963.

It has partly come true. The problem now is to keep it from coming true completely or, worse, making it come true eventually by inept efforts to stop it.

